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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 16, 2004

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### **SIERRA VISTA MAN SENTENCED TO 35 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR SMUGGLING 33 ALIENS**

**TUCSON, Ariz.** -- The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that on August 16, 2004, Steven Banks of Sierra Vista, Ariz., DOB. 06/06/56, was sentenced by Federal District Court Judge David C. Bury to 35 months prison after having pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Transport Illegal Aliens in violation of Title 8, U.S. Code, Section 1324 in federal district court in Tucson, Ariz.

On January 26, 2004, after federal law enforcement agents received information regarding alien smuggling activity near Hereford, Ariz., the agents observed a suspicious northbound U-Haul truck. Agents stopped the truck and asked the driver what was in the truck. The driver told them he had furniture and gave the agents permission to look in the cargo section of the truck. When agents opened the cargo door, they observed several bodies piled into the back of the U-Haul. A total of thirty-three aliens were found tightly packed inside the truck. Banks told agents he intended to take the undocumented aliens to Phoenix where he would be paid \$30 per illegal alien.

Co-defendants Donna Stanyer and Roberto Beltran-Beltran were sentenced earlier this year to eighteen months and twelve months, respectively.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Border Patrol. The prosecution was handled by Celeste Corlett, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-04-0363-TUC-DCB (BPV)  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2004-139

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